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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 000656

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA, AF/SPG

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KPKO](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [SU](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH HEAD OF THE SUDANESE NATIONAL
CONGRESS PARTY OFFICE IN CAIRO

Classified By: Minister Counselor for Economic and Political Affairs
William R. Stewart for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Key Points:

-- Kamal al-Din Hassan Ail, the Director of the Sudanese National Congress Party's (NCP) office in Cairo told us April 1 that the ICC arrest warrant sent the wrong message to rebel groups. He said the Sudanese people are united behind Bashir, and Bashir's trip to Egypt was a signal that engagement with Sudan is important.

-- Expelled international NGOs will not be allowed back into Sudan because they provided "false documentation" to the ICC. The Government of Sudan (GOS) is working with "partners in the Arab and Islamic communities" to fill the humanitarian aid gap due to the expulsion.

-- The Government of Egypt (GOE) is working to preserve Sudan's stability. Egypt is the "largest contributor" to the UNAMID forces, has humanitarian and development projects in Darfur and South Sudan, and will provide humanitarian aid to fill the gaps left by the NGO expulsion.

-- The GOS believes the Arab League (AL) is important in unifying the Arab states, and it helped to jump start the Qatari peace initiative.

-- The U.S. role in Sudan is primarily negative. However, the appointment of a new special envoy is a "step forward." The NCP feels that if the U.S. and U.N. work together with the GOS for peace in Sudan, it will be achieved.

12. Comment: Ali is a very effusive and likeable gentlemen and a consummate politician. As you walk into his office, there is a large picture of Ali and President Bashir sitting on a couch in Ali's office. Both are dressed in jalabiyyas and emmas (traditional Sudanese clothing and headdresses). Our meeting began with a strained discussion of the ICC arrest warrant and NGO expulsions. As the meeting progressed the tenor changed, and at the end of the meeting Ali advocated for a strong U.S. role in helping to resolve the crises in Sudan and invited us to his house for Sudanese food. Egypt deployed approximately 1,700 troops to UNAMID and plans to send an additional 600 soldiers. End Comment.

Bashir Visit to Cairo Important in Light of ICC Decision

13. (C) Ali told us on April 1 that Sudanese President Bashir's March 25 visit to Cairo was extremely important, especially coming after the ICC decision to issue an arrest warrant. He said Bashir's trips to Egypt, Eritrea, Libya, and Qatar sent a message to the international community to engage with Sudan. He told us that the ICC's decision to issue the warrant sent the wrong message to the rebel groups.

Ali stated that the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) refuses to return to Doha because of the ICC arrest warrant. He said the focus should be on getting the rebel groups to the negotiating table, not giving them a reason to stay away.

Expulsion of International NGOs Irreversible

¶4. (C) Ali told us that only 13 international NGOs were expelled from Sudan, but other international NGOs are still operating freely in Darfur. He stated that the expelled NGOs only provided 6 percent of the "humanitarian resources" in Darfur. Ali said the NGOs in question would not be allowed back because the GOS has evidence that these NGOs violated Sudanese law by working outside their humanitarian mandate in providing "false documentation" to the ICC. He admitted that the expulsion left a gap in the provision of humanitarian aid that the GOS did not have the capacity to fill. However, Ali told us that the GOS is working with the "partners in the Arab and Islamic communities" to fill the gap left by the NGOs. He said the GOS' focus is to find partners that can do the work "cheaper and more efficiently." He asserted that the World Food Program provides a ton of corn to the refugees at a cost of USD 130 per metric ton (MT), while local Sudanese organizations can provide the corn for only USD 20 per MT. Ali said that changing to more cost efficient NGOs will be better for all concerned parties.

An Opportunity for National Reconciliation

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¶5. (C) Ali said the Sudanese population united, as never before, behind President Bashir in the aftermath of the ICC arrest warrant. The NCP remained committed to working with the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) to implement the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA). Ali told us that there are some problems with implementation because of the "comprehensive nature" of the agreement. He added that the NCP is consulting with the SPLM to resolve these issues. However, he stated that the war in Darfur also makes CPA implementation difficult.

¶6. (C) Ali opined that the NCP has a "historical opportunity" to reconcile the Sudanese parties. Sudan is growing economically, he said, and it is the only country in the region where elections are "freely contested." Ali said that elections will take place in the near future, after a national reconciliation process, because the GOS does not want a "coup" or a "Zimbabwe situation." However, he said it would be difficult to start this process before the rains arrive in May. (Note: Northern Sudan/Darfur's rainy season is from July to September. South Sudan's rainy season is from May to November. End Note). Ali said that an agreement on the reconciliation process and the elections would be worked out between the NCP and SPLM.

Egypt Supporting Sudan to Resolve Crises

¶7. (C) Ali praised Egypt's work to preserve stability in Sudan. Egypt is the "largest contributor" to the UNAMID forces, and the GOE is undertaking humanitarian and development projects in Darfur and South Sudan. Ali told us that Egyptian Intelligence Chief Soliman and FM Aboul Gheit convinced Khartoum to give the joint Arab/African initiative a chance at helping to resolve the war in Darfur. He stated that President Bashir asked President Mubarak to help fill the gaps left by the expulsion of the NGOs from the country, and President Mubarak agreed. According to Ali, Bashir also asked for Egyptian assistance in improving Sudan's bilateral relations with the U.S., U.K. and France.

Arab League Playing a Unifying Role

18. (C) Ali called the Arab League (AL) Summit in Doha "a big meeting" even without the presence of President Mubarak. He stated that all the Arab League states were "united behind Sudan." Support was important in starting the Qatari initiative, he said, and he sees the AL as important in uniting Arabs to support common causes. He believes that the AL will play a role in bringing peace to the region, and in limiting illegal migration to Europe.

U.S. Role Negative, Could Be Positive

19. (C) Ali said the U.S. was playing a negative role in Sudan by pushing the ICC process, pressuring the GOS on the CPA and Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), and condemning the government, while encouraging the rebel groups. He said that USG's application of political and economic pressure on the GOS is counterproductive. Ali asserted that it is not in the U.S. interests for the GOS to fall apart and have "Sudan turn into another Somalia." He encouraged the USG to support GOS efforts to resolve Sudan's problems and to put pressure on the rebels to work with the government. Ali stated that intelligence cooperation between the U.S. and Sudan had helped in the "war on terrorism," and he told us that the NCP viewed the appointment of new Special Envoy Gration as "step forward" in the bi-lateral relationship. Ali hoped that there could be future "economic cooperation" between the U.S. and Sudan. He opined that if the U.S. and U.N. work together with the GOS for peace in Sudan, it will be achieved.
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